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REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner noted that claims 1-58 are pending, claims 54 and 58 are allowed, and claims 1-53 and 55-57 are rejected in the application. The Applicants responded to the provisional double patenting rejection in the Response to the Final Office Action, which was mailed January 21, 2004. Since the Examiner was silent on this matter in the present Office Action, the Applicants assume that the position presented was accepted by the Examiner. In view of the following discussion, the Applicants submit that none of the claims now pending in the application are unpatentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112, 35 U.S.C. § 102, and 35 U.S.C. § 103. Thus, the Applicants believe that all of these claims are now in condition for allowance.

I. ALLOWED SUBJECT MATTER

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowability of claims 54 and 58 over the prior art of record.

II. OBJECTION TO DRAWINGS

The Examiner has objected to the drawings for failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a) because the drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Notably, the negative limitation for "transmitting at least on television signal over media from the residential gateway to the at least on television without the at least one television signal going through an intermediate device" must be shown. The Examiner specifically objected to Figure 6 since it illustrated a multiple TV environment, but only depicted one TV that received television signals "without going through an intermediate device". The Examiner also objected to Figure 8 since it illustrated a multiple TV environment, although the local television associated with the S-video connection received signals through an intermediate device.

The Applicants submit that the drawings submitted satisfy the requirements of 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a). The Applicants contend that objected Figures 6 and 8 simply depict different embodiments of the present invention. Moreover,

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the Applicants have amended the claims to eliminate the negative limitation cited by the Examiner (i.e., "without...going through an intermediate device") to more clearly define the present invention. In light of these amended claims and the explanation presented above, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner's objection be withdrawn.

II. REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-17

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-17 as being unpatentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, for failing to comply with the written description requirement. More specifically, the Examiner contends that the specification does not disclose that the "at least one television signal" is "transmitted...over media from the residential gateway to the at least one television without the at least one television signal going through an intermediate device." In response, the Applicants have amended claim 1 in order to more clearly recite aspects of the invention. Specifically, the term "intermediate device", among other portions of the claim, has been deleted from claim 1. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is patentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Dependent claims 2-17 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1 and recite additional features thereof. As such and for the exact same reasons set forth above, the Applicants submit that claims 2-17 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable thereunder.

Claims 3-12

The Examiner has rejected claims 3-12 as being unpatentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. More specifically, the Examiner contends that claim 3 is directed towards the embodiments wherein each of the remote televisions is associated with a remote antenna package, which constitutes an "intermediate

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device." In response, the Applicants have amended claim 1, from which claim 3 depends, in order to more clearly recite aspects of the invention. Notably, the term "intermediate device" has been deleted from claim 1. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is patentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112. Claims 3-12 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1 and recite additional features thereof. As such and for the same reasons set forth above, the Applicants submit that claims 3-12 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable thereunder.

Claims 13-17

The Examiner has rejected claims 13-17 as being unpatentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Claims 13-17 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1. As presented above, the Applicants have amended claim 1 in a fashion that excludes "intermediate device", among other portions of the claim, from the claim. Consequently, the Applicants submit that amended claim 1 is patentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112. Claims 13-17 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1 and recite additional features thereof. As such and for the same reasons set forth above, the Applicants submit that claims 13-17 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable thereunder.

Claims 18-34

The Examiner has rejected claims 18-34 as being unpatentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. In response, the Applicants have amended claim 18 in order to more clearly recite aspects of the invention. Specifically, the term "intermediate device", among other portions of the claim, has been deleted from claim 18. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 18 is patentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Dependent claims 19-34 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 18 and recite additional features thereof. As such and for the same reasons set

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forth above, the Applicants submit that claims 19-34 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable thereunder.

Claims 20-34

The Examiner has rejected claims 20-34 as being unpatentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Claims 20-34 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 18. As presented above, the Applicants have amended claim 18 in a manner that excludes "intermediate device", among other portions of the claim, from the claim. Consequently, the Applicants submit that amended claim 18 is patentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112. Claims 19-34 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 18 and recite additional features thereof. As such and for the same reasons set forth above, the Applicants submit that claims 19-34 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable thereunder.

Claims 35-44

The Examiner has rejected claims 35-44 as being unpatentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. In response, the Applicants have amended claim 35 in order to more clearly recite aspects of the invention. Specifically, the term "intermediate device", among other portions of the claim, has been deleted from claim 35. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 35 is patentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Dependent claims 36-44 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 35 and recite additional features thereof. As such and for the same reasons set forth above, the Applicants submit that claims 36-44 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable thereunder.

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Claims 37, 38, and 40-43

The Examiner has rejected claims 37, 38, and 40-43 as being unpatentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Claims 37, 38, and 40-43 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 35. As presented above, the Applicants have amended claim 35 in a fashion that excludes "intermediate device", among other portions of the claim, from claim 35. Consequently, the Applicants submit that amended claim 35 is patentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112. Claims 37, 38 and 40-43 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 35 and recite additional features thereof. As such and for the same reasons set forth above, the Applicants submit that claims 37, 38 and 40-43 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable thereunder.

Claims 45 and 46

The Examiner rejected claims 45 and 46 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Namely, the Examiner alleges that the specification does not disclose the negative limitation of "transmitting the television signals to the at least one television without sending the television signals through the remote antenna packages" or the "remote antenna package does not receive television signals from the residential gateway or transmit television signals to the associated television." According to the Examiner, Figure 6 illustrates a remote antenna package that clearly illustrates a transmission path from the gateway [200] to the remote antenna module [900] to the television [199].

In response, the Applicants have amended claims 45 and 46 to overcome the Examiner's rejection. Notably, the Applicants have deleted the limitation "without sending the television signals through the remote antennae packages" from the claim. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that amended claims 45 and 46 are patentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and 35 U.S.C. § 102.

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Claims 47-49

The Examiner has rejected claims 47-49 as being unpatentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. In response, the Applicants have amended claim 47 in order to more clearly recite aspects of the invention. Specifically, the term "intermediate device", among other portions of the claim, has been deleted from claim 47. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is patentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Dependent claims 48-49 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 47 and recite additional features thereof. As such and for the same reasons set forth above, the Applicants submit that claims 48-49 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable thereunder.

III. REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-7, 18-24, 31, 32, and 34-47 rejected in view of Eames et al.

Claims 1-7, 18-24, 31, 32, and 34-47 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Eames et al. (WO 98/37648, published August 27, 1998, hereinafter Eames). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Eames is not a proper reference to the claimed invention because the "grand" parent application (U.S. Patent No. 6,317,884, issued November 13, 2001, hereinafter "the '884 patent"), from which the present application claims priority to, provides support for the claimed invention and has an effective filing date (February 19, 1997) that is earlier than Eames' publication date (August 27, 1998). Moreover, Eames is the international application published under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) for the '884 patent and is therefore being improperly used as a prior art reference. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claims 45, 46, 50-53, and 55-57 rejected in view of Swisher et al.

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The Examiner rejected claims 45, 46, 50-53, and 55-57 as being anticipated by Swisher et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,418,149, issued July 9, 2002, hereinafter Swisher). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Swisher is a system and method for using existing wiring or cabling in a residence to transmit network telecommunications to a gateway for processing and to distribute processed signals from the device to video, telephony and data receivers.

The Examiner alleges that claim 45 is anticipated by Swisher. The Examiner's attention is directed to the fact that Swisher does not teach, mention or suggest a "media interface device" which demodulates the wireless signals and extracts the channel select commands as set forth in claim 45. Specifically, Applicants' claim 45 positively recites:

45. A method for receiving and decoding signals from a telecommunications network at a residential gateway, and transmitting the decoded signals from the residential gateway to a plurality of devices including multiple televisions, the method comprising:

connecting the residential gateway to the telecommunications network and to at least one television that is remotely located from the residential gateway, wherein the residential gateway is a unitary device and is capable of directly receiving channel select commands from remote control devices associated with the multiple televisions;

selecting a television channel to view for the at least one television by programming associated wireless remote control devices, wherein the wireless remote control devices transmit channel select commands as wireless signals to remote antennae packages connected to the at least one television, the remote antennae packages receive the wireless signals and transmit the wireless signals over media to a media interface device which demodulates the wireless signals and extracts the portion corresponding to the channel select commands;

transmitting the channel select commands to the telecommunications network;

receiving a video signal from the telecommunications network;

processing the video signal to produce television signals corresponding to the channel select commands, wherein the processing is performed by a video processor; and

transmitting the television signals to the at least one television. (Emphasis added)

Again, since Swisher fails to teach or mention a method that utilizes a media interface device as set forth in claim 45 of the present invention, the Applicants submit that claim 45 fully satisfies the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 102 and is patentable thereunder.

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The Examiner also alleges that claims 50-53 and 57 are anticipated by Swisher. The Examiner contends that the system comprising the "residential gateway" and associated components illustrated in Figure 3 are interpreted as comprising a "media interface device." First, the Applicants submit that the "media interface device" and the residential gateway are two separate devices. Support for this assertion can be found in Figure 8 of the Applicants' application. Second, the Applicants submit that Swisher does not disclose a remote antennae module for receiving a fourth signal and extracting a signal therefrom as set forth in Applicants' independent claims 50 and 57. Specifically, the Applicants submit that Swisher does not teach a media interface device or the extraction of channel select commands in any manner. Specifically, Applicants' claims 50 and 57 positively recite:

50. A media interface device for directional distribution of signals to multiple devices over a media, the media interface comprising:
a first connector for receiving a first signal in a first direction;
a second connector for receiving a second signal in the first direction and transmitting a third signal in a second direction;
a third connector for transmitting the first signal and the second signal over the media in the first direction and receiving the third signal and a fourth signal over the media in the second direction;
a diplexer for extracting the third signal from the media in the second direction and inserting the second signal onto the media in the first direction;
a remote antennae module for receiving the fourth signal and extracting a fifth signal therefrom; and
a fourth connector for transmitting the fifth signal in the second direction.

57. A media interface device for connecting to a residential gateway and distributing signals to and from the residential gateway over a media, the media interface comprising:
a first connector for receiving and transmitting signals over a media, the received signals including wireless signals from wireless remote control devices associated with remotely located TVs and downstream network signals from a telecommunications network, the transmitted signals including TV signals and upstream network signals;
a second connector for receiving the TV signals from the residential gateway;
a third connector for receiving the upstream network signals from the residential gateway and transmitting the downstream network signals to the residential gateway;
a diplexer, connected to said first connector, for extracting the downstream network signals from the media and inserting the upstream network signals onto the media;
a balun, connected to said diplexer, for adjusting the impedance of the upstream network signals so they can be inserted onto the media by said diplexer, and for adjusting the impedance of the downstream network signals so they can be

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processed by the residential gateway; and
a remote antennae module, connected to said diplexer, for extracting the channel select commands from the wireless signals and transmitting the channel select commands to the residential gateway.

The Examiner alleges that the remote antenna module set forth in Applicants' claims 50 and 57 are represented by the diplexer [620] disclosed in Swisher. The Applicants submit that this diplexer does not extract channel select commands from a signal for the use of a residential gateway. Rather, the Applicants contend that the diplexer is used to split an incoming combined signal into separate VDSL and RF signals to be used by a residential gateway. The Applicants contend that this function is not the same as extracting a channel select command from a modulated signal. Therefore, the Applicants submit that claims 50 and 57 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 102 and are patentable thereunder.

Dependent claims 51-53 and 55-56 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 50 and recite additional features thereof. As such and for the exact same reasons set forth above, the Applicants submit that claims 51-53 and 55-56 are also not anticipated by the teaching of Swisher. Therefore, the Applicants submit that these dependent claims also fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 102 and are patentable thereunder.

Claims 1, 3-7, 13-14, 18, 20-24, 31, 35, 37-43, and 45-47 rejected in view of Ehreth et al.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-7, 13-14, 18, 20-24, 31, 35, 37-43, and 45-47 as being anticipated by the Ehreth et al. patent (United States patent 6,286,142, issued September 4, 2001, hereinafter Ehreth).

Ehreth teaches a system comprising a communication controller, a plurality of televisions, and a plurality of corresponding channel selection and signaling units. The system functions by having the channel selection and signaling unit receiving a channel select command from a remote control that is associated with a particular television. The channel selection and signaling unit then sends a signal at a particular upstream frequency to an upstream signaling

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receiver within a communication controller. A unique upstream frequency is specifically designated at each "user selectable setting" located within each channel selection and signaling unit. The communication controller receives a video signal from a telecommunications network and modulates the signal to a unique downstream frequency that is associated with the original upstream frequency of the channel selection and signaling unit. The communication controller then transmits the video signal over a video signal distribution network to a plurality of channel selection and signaling units at the designated downstream frequency. The particular channel selection and signaling unit that is configured to receive the video signal at the appropriate downstream frequency receives the signal and subsequently transmits a television signal to its corresponding television.

Thus, for every television (or set of televisions at a remote site), a channel selection and signaling unit directly receives a channel select command from the remote control and transmits a signal over the video signal distribution network to the communication controller at a designated upstream frequency. The communication controller responds by modulating the desired video information and transmits it to the appropriate channel selection and signaling unit on a particular downstream frequency. Because each channel selection and signaling unit for each television (or set of televisions at a remote site) has a separate upstream frequency and downstream frequency, independent control for each television set (or remote site) is possible (see Ehreth, Abstract and Figure 1).

The Examiner's attention is directed to the fact that Ehreth fails to disclose or teach a residential gateway that is capable of directly receiving channel select commands from remote control devices associated with a plurality of televisions, as claimed in Applicants' independent claims 1, 18, and 35. Likewise, Ehreth fails to disclose a media interface device as claimed in Applicants' independent claims 45, 46, and 47. Specifically, Applicants' claims 1, 18, 35, 45, 46, and 47 as amended, positively recite:

1. A method of receiving, decoding and distributing video signals from a telecommunications network to a plurality of televisions locatable in at least two

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separate locations within a residential environment via a residential gateway, the method comprising:

receiving at least one channel select command from one of a plurality of remote control devices associated with a respective one of the plurality of televisions, wherein at least a first one of the plurality of remote control devices transmits the channel select command directly to a receiver within the residential gateway, wherein said residential gateway is a unitary device and is capable of directly receiving a plurality of channel select commands from said plurality of remote control devices;

receiving a video signal from the telecommunications network;

transporting the video signal to a video processor;

processing the video signal to produce at least one television signal corresponding to the at least one channel select command; and

transmitting the at least one television signal over media from the residential gateway to the at least one television. (Emphasis added)

18. A residential gateway for distributing video signals to a plurality of televisions locatable within at least two separate locations in a residential environment, said residential gateway comprising:

a receiver for directly receiving channel select commands from remote control devices associated with the televisions;

a network interface module for receiving signals, including video signals, from a telecommunications network, wherein the received video signals correspond to the channel select commands;

a video processor for processing the video signals to produce at least one television signal, wherein the video processor transmits the at least one television signal over media to a corresponding television, wherein said residential gateway is a unitary device. (Emphasis added)

35. A method for receiving and decoding signals from a telecommunications network at a residential gateway, and transmitting decoded signals from the residential gateway to a plurality of devices including multiple televisions, the method comprising:

connecting each of the plurality of devices and the telecommunications network to the residential gateway so that all communications between the devices and the telecommunications network must pass through the residential gateway, wherein said residential gateway is a unitary device;

selecting a television channel to view for at least one of the multiple televisions by programming an associated remote control device to transmit a channel select command, wherein the channel select commands from said plurality of remote control devices are directly received by a receiver within the residential gateway;

transmitting the at least one channel select command to the telecommunications network;

receiving a video signal from the telecommunications network;

processing the video signal into at least one television signal corresponding to the at least one channel select command, the processing performed by a video processor; and

transmitting the at least one television signal over media from the residential gateway to the appropriate television. (Emphasis added)

45. A method for receiving and decoding signals from a telecommunications network at a residential gateway, and transmitting the decoded signals from the residential gateway to a plurality of devices including multiple televisions, the method comprising:

connecting the residential gateway to the telecommunications network and to

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at least one television that is remotely located from the residential gateway, wherein from remote control devices associated with the multiple televisions;
selecting a television channel to view for the at least one television by programming associated wireless remote control devices, wherein the wireless remote control devices transmit channel select commands as wireless signals to remote antennae packages connected to the at least one television, the remote antennae packages receive the wireless signals and transmit the wireless signals over media to a media interface device which demodulates the wireless signals and extracts the portion corresponding to the channel select commands;
transmitting the channel select commands to the telecommunications network;
receiving a video signal from the telecommunications network;
processing the video signal to produce television signals corresponding to the channel select commands, wherein the processing is performed by a video processor;
and
transmitting the television signals to the at least one television. (Emphasis added)

46. A residential gateway for receiving and decoding signals from a telecommunications network and transmitting the decoded signals to a plurality of devices including multiple televisions, the residential gateway comprising:
a network interface module for transmitting upstream signals, including channel select commands, to the telecommunications network and receiving downstream signals, including video signals, from the telecommunications network;
a video processor for processing the video signals into at least one television signal corresponding to at least one channel select command, and transmitting the at least one television signal to the corresponding television;
a remote control module for processing the channel select commands, wherein at least one of the channel select commands is extracted from a wireless signal, the wireless signal being transmitted from a wireless remote control device to a remote antennae package connected to the associated television, the remote antennae package transmitting the wireless signal over media to a media interface device which demodulates the wireless signal and extracts the portion corresponding to the channel select command. (Emphasis added)

47. A system for receiving and decoding signals from a telecommunications network and transmitting the decoded signals to a plurality of devices including multiple televisions, comprising:
a residential gateway comprising
a network interface module for transmitting upstream signals, including channel select commands, to the telecommunications network and receiving downstream signals, including video signals, from the telecommunications network;
and
a video processor for decoding the video signals into at least one television signal corresponding to at least one channel select command, and transmitting the at least one television signal to the corresponding television;
a remote antennae package located in close proximity to and connected to a remotely located television, said remote antennae package receiving a wireless signal, including a channel select command, from a wireless remote control device associated with the remotely located television and modulating the wireless signal over media; and
a media interface device connected to the media and the residential gateway for demodulating the wireless signal, extracting the portion corresponding to the channel select command, and transmitting the channel select command to the residential gateway. (Emphasis added)

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As recited in the claims 1, 18, and 35 the Applicants' invention teaches a method involving a unitary residential gateway device that can, among other portions of the claim, directly receive channel select commands from remote control devices associated with the plurality of televisions. In contrast, Ehreth does not teach or suggest this novel approach. Specifically, Ehreth fails to teach a residential gateway that directly receives a channel select command by a receiver within the residential gateway. The communication controller disclosed in Ehreth is incapable of receiving channel select commands directly. Rather, the device is wholly dependent on a channel selection and signaling unit to both receive a channel select command from the remote control and provide a unique television signal to a particular television. This is due to the unique upstream and downstream frequencies designated by the channeling selection and signaling unit (specifically, the "user selectable setting") that enables the channeling selection and signaling unit to independently request and receive a specific television signal for an associated television (or remote site). Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 18 and 35 are patentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 102.

Furthermore, as recited in the claims 45, 46, and 47 the Applicants' invention teaches a media interface device that demodulates the wireless signals and extracts the channel select commands. The Applicants submit that Ehreth does not teach or mention such a media interface device. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 45, 46, and 47 are patentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 102.

Dependent claims 3-7, 13-14, 20-24, 31, and 37-43 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claims 1, 18, and 35 and recite additional features thereof. As such and for the exact same reasons set forth above, the Applicants submit that claims 3-7, 13-14, 20-24, 31, and 37-43 are also not anticipated by the teaching of Ehreth. Therefore, the Applicants submit that these dependent claims also fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 102 and are patentable thereunder.

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IV. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 2, 8-12, 19, 25-30, 32-34, 36, AND 44 UNDER 35

U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 2, 8-12, 19, 25-30, 32-34, 36, and 44 as being obvious and unpatentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). In particular, the Examiner has rejected claims 2, 8-12, 19, 25-30, 32-34, 36, and 44 as being unpatentable over Ehreth. The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The Examiner's attention is directed to the fact that Ehreth in combination with the Examiner's Official Notice fails to teach a residential gateway that directly receives channel select commands by a receiver within the residential gateway as discussed above. The fact that an integrated "optical receiver" in conjunction with a video program distribution device is notoriously well known in the art does not bridge the substantial gap between the Applicants' claimed invention and Ehreth. Therefore, the Applicants submit that Ehreth in combination with the Examiner's Official notice fails to teach, disclose, motivate or suggest a residential gateway that directly receives a channel select command via a receiver within the residential gateway itself, as recited in Applicants' independent claims 1, 18, and 35. Thus, Ehreth fails to teach or suggest the Applicants' invention, as set forth in independent claims 1, 18, and 35 as a whole. Consequently, the Applicants submit that independent claims 1, 18, and 35 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 103 and are patentable thereunder.

Since claims 2, 8-12, 19, 25-30, 32-34, 36, and 44 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claims 1, 18, and 35 and recite additional features thereof, the Applicants submit that claims 2, 8-12, 19, 25-30, 32-34, 36, and 44 are also not made obvious by the teaching of Ehreth. Therefore, the Applicants submit that claims 2, 8-12, 19, 25-30, 32-34, 36, and 44 also fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 103 and are patentable thereunder.

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CONCLUSION

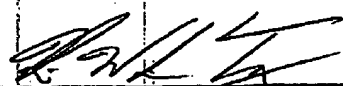
The Applicants respectfully submit that none of the claims presently in the application are unpatentable under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112, 35 U.S.C. § 102, and 35 U.S.C. § 103. Consequently, the Applicants believe that all these claims are presently in condition for allowance. Accordingly, both reconsideration of this application and its swift passage to issue are earnestly solicited.

If, however, the Examiner believes that there are any unresolved issues requiring adverse final action in any of the claims now pending in the application, it is requested that the Examiner telephone Mr. Kin-Wah Tong at (732) 530-9404 so that appropriate arrangements can be made for resolving such issues as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

10/29/04


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